

Whereas reconstruction assistance should be administered in a transparent, accountable, and equitable manner in order to help alleviate sectarian grievances and facilitate national political reconciliation;

Whereas the United States has already spent approximately \$29,000,000,000 on reconstruction assistance and Congress has authorized the expenditure of an additional \$16,500,000,000 \$18,500,000,000 on reconstruction assistance and Congress has authorized the expenditure of \$24,000,000,000 for reconstruction assistance;

Whereas, on December 18, 2007, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that, as of October 2007, international donors had pledged a total of approximately \$16,400,000,000 in support of Iraq's reconstruction since 2003, of which roughly \$13,600,000,000 was pledged at an October 2003 donor conference in Madrid, Spain;

Whereas the GAO reported that international donors have provided only approximately \$7,000,000,000 for reconstruction assistance, or less than half of the original pledged amount;

Whereas the conclusion reached by the Iraq Study Group (ISG) in December 2006 that "[i]nternational support for Iraqi reconstruction has been tepid" remains true and reinforces the ISG's subsequent recommendation that "[a]n essential part of reconstruction efforts in Iraq should be greater involvement by and with international partners, who should do more than just contribute money. . . . [t]hey should also actively participate in the design and construction of projects";

Whereas Iraq's regional neighbors, in particular, carry a special imperative to bolster reconstruction assistance efforts to Iraq, given the vital importance of a peaceful and secure Iraq to their security interests and overall regional stability; and

Whereas those countries have prospered in recent years due to the rising price of their oil exports and enjoy expanded government revenue from which funds could be allocated for reconstruction assistance to Iraq: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) Iraq's neighbors and other key international partners should fully carry through on previous pledges of reconstruction assistance to the Government of Iraq, working to mitigate and circumvent, where necessary, potential obstacles to the effective implementation of those pledges; and

(2) the United States should consider a recommendation proposed by the Iraq Study Group to merge reconstruction assistance funds provided by the United States with funds from international donors and Iraqi participants to help ensure that assistance projects in Iraq are carried out in the most rapid and efficient manner possible.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I further ask that the amendment which is at the desk be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the amendment to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 4653) was agreed to, as follows:

On page 3, beginning on line 9, strike "to merge reconstruction assistance funds provided by the United States

with funds" and insert "to coordinate United States reconstruction assistance funds, in whatever form they are provided, with funds".

The resolution (S. Res. 494), as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

#### S. RES. 494

Whereas a sustained flow of international economic reconstruction assistance to the Government of Iraq and provincial and regional authorities in Iraq is essential to the restoration of basic services in Iraq, job creation, and the future stabilization of that country;

Whereas reconstruction assistance should be administered in a transparent, accountable, and equitable manner in order to help alleviate sectarian grievances and facilitate national political reconciliation;

Whereas the United States has already spent approximately \$18,500,000,000 on reconstruction assistance and Congress has authorized the expenditure of \$24,000,000,000 for reconstruction assistance;

Whereas, on December 18, 2007, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that, as of October 2007, international donors had pledged a total of approximately \$16,400,000,000 in support of Iraq's reconstruction since 2003, of which roughly \$13,600,000,000 was pledged at an October 2003 donor conference in Madrid, Spain;

Whereas the GAO reported that international donors have provided only approximately \$7,000,000,000 for reconstruction assistance, or less than half of the original pledged amount;

Whereas the conclusion reached by the Iraq Study Group (ISG) in December 2006 that "[i]nternational support for Iraqi reconstruction has been tepid" remains true and reinforces the ISG's subsequent recommendation that "[a]n essential part of reconstruction efforts in Iraq should be greater involvement by and with international partners, who should do more than just contribute money. . . . [t]hey should also actively participate in the design and construction of projects";

Whereas Iraq's regional neighbors, in particular, carry a special imperative to bolster reconstruction assistance efforts to Iraq, given the vital importance of a peaceful and secure Iraq to their security interests and overall regional stability; and

Whereas those countries have prospered in recent years due to the rising price of their oil exports and enjoy expanded government revenue from which funds could be allocated for reconstruction assistance to Iraq: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) Iraq's neighbors and other key international partners should fully carry through on previous pledges of reconstruction assistance to the Government of Iraq, working to mitigate and circumvent, where necessary, potential obstacles to the effective implementation of those pledges; and

(2) the United States should consider a recommendation proposed by the Iraq Study Group to coordinate United States reconstruction assistance funds, in whatever form they are provided, with funds from international donors and Iraqi participants to help ensure that assistance projects in Iraq are carried out in the most rapid and efficient manner possible.

#### NATIONAL DRUG COURT MONTH

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 534 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 534) designating the month of May 2008 as "National Drug Court Month."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and the preamble be agreed to en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, and any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 534) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

#### S. RES. 534

Whereas drug courts provide focus and leadership for community-wide partnerships, bringing together public safety and public health professionals in the fight against drug abuse and criminality;

Whereas 60 percent to 80 percent of drug offenders sentenced to prison and over 40 percent sentenced to probation recidivate, and whereas fewer than 17 percent of drug court graduates recidivate;

Whereas the results of more than 100 program evaluations and at least 3 experimental studies have yielded evidence that drug courts greatly improve substance abuse treatment outcomes, substantially reduce crime, and produce significant societal benefits;

Whereas drug courts transform over 120,000 addicts each year in the adult, juvenile, and family court systems into drug-free, productive citizens;

Whereas judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation professionals, law enforcement and community supervision personnel, researchers and educators, national and community leaders, and others dedicated to drug courts and similar types of treatment programs are healing families and communities across the country; and

Whereas the drug court movement has grown from the 12 original drug courts in 1994 to over 2,000 operational drug courts as of December 2007: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of May 2008 as "National Drug Court Month";

(2) encourages the people of the United States and interested groups to observe the month with appropriate ceremonies and activities;

(3) encourages leaders across the United States to increase the use of drug courts by instituting sustainable drug courts and other treatment-based alternatives to prison in all 3,143 counties in the United States, which serve the vast majority of the highest-need citizens in the justice system; and

(4) supports the goal of robustly funding the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program and other treatment-based alternatives

to prison in order to expand these critical criminal justice programs.

#### NATIONAL SUBSTITUTE TEACHER RECOGNITION WEEK

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 544 which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 544) designating May 5 through 9, 2008, as National Substitute Teacher Recognition Week.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of the 7th Annual "National Substitute Teacher Recognition Week," which is celebrated in conjunction with Teacher Appreciation Week. This is a national effort to recognize the approximately 270,000 men and women that fill in for absent permanent teachers every day in the United States.

According to research performed by the Substitute Teaching Institute—STI—at Utah State University, as much as 1 full year of a child's elementary and secondary education is taught by substitute teachers. More often than not, these are talented individuals who are willing to take on the challenge of providing quality education when permanent teachers are out of the classroom. I believe it is only appropriate that we do something to recognize the efforts of these members of our communities who fill a void in the education of our children and play a vital role in maintaining continuity of instruction and a positive learning environment for students throughout our country.

I would also like to recognize and commend the work and dedication of the Substitute Teaching Institute. Established in 1995, STI provides substitute teachers with training materials to improve the quality of their contribution to classroom activities. Over the last 12 years, STI has evolved and grown to become one of our Nation's leaders in the effort to improve substitute teaching, providing training materials and services along with recruitment and retention assistance to school districts and substitute teachers around the world. Having expanded its work over the years, the STI continually works to revolutionize the role of substitute teachers into opportunities for educational excellence.

I am joined by Senators CLINTON and COCHRAN in submitting a resolution designating May 5–9, 2008 as National Substitute Teacher Recognition Week, and I urge all my colleagues to lend their support.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed

to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 544) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

#### S. RES. 544

Whereas, on average, as much as 1 full year of a child's elementary and secondary education is taught by substitute teachers;

Whereas, on any given day in the United States, more than 270,000 classes are taught by substitute teachers;

Whereas formal training of substitute teachers has been shown to improve the quality of education, lower school district liability, reduce the number of student and faculty complaints, and increase retention rates of substitute teachers;

Whereas a strong, effective system of education for all children and youth is essential to our Nation's continued strength and prosperity;

Whereas much of a child's growth and progress can be attributed to the efforts of dedicated teachers and substitute teachers who are entrusted with the child's educational development;

Whereas substitute teachers play a vital role in maintaining continuity of instruction and a positive learning environment in the absence of a permanent classroom teacher; and

Whereas substitute teachers should be recognized for their dedication and commitment: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 5 through 9, 2008, as the 7th annual National Substitute Teacher Recognition Week;

(2) recognizes the important and vital role substitute teachers play in a child's education; and

(3) encourages educational institutions to observe the week with appropriate events and activities.

#### HONORING THE RECIPIENTS OF THE EL DORADO PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 545, which was submitted earlier today by Senator PRYOR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 545) honoring the recipients of the El Dorado Promise Scholarship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements related thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 545) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

#### S. RES. 545

Whereas the 2000 United States Census determined that El Dorado, Arkansas, had a significantly lower percentage of residents with degrees from institutions of higher education and a significantly higher percentage of families who fell below the poverty line than the national average;

Whereas it is increasingly important for students to obtain a college education in order to keep up with the demands of the modern workforce and global economy;

Whereas the El Dorado Promise scholarship is a tuition scholarship, created and funded by Murphy Oil Corporation, which enables all eligible high school graduates of the El Dorado Public School District in El Dorado, Arkansas, to attend any accredited 2- or 4-year, public or private, college or university;

Whereas school enrollment in the El Dorado Public School District has significantly increased since the El Dorado Promise scholarship program was established, despite a 15-year trend of decreasing enrollment;

Whereas the El Dorado Promise scholarship program increased the number of El Dorado High School students who chose to attend college after graduation by 20 percent; and

Whereas, on April 30, 2008, El Dorado High School students who receive El Dorado Promise and other academic scholarships sign academic letters of intent for the colleges they will be attending upon graduation: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the recipients of the El Dorado Promise scholarship for choosing to further their education;

(2) recognizes April 30, 2008, as the second Academic Signing Day for graduating El Dorado High School students receiving El Dorado Promise and other academic scholarships;

(3) acknowledges that the El Dorado Promise scholarship program is important for the revitalization of southern Arkansas; and

(4) recognizes Murphy Oil Corporation for its efforts to ensure that children from southern Arkansas, who might otherwise struggle in financing a college education, are able to attend college.

#### NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH AND NATIONAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS WEEK

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 546, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 546) designating May 2008 as "National Physical Fitness and Sports Month," and the week of May 1 through May 7, 2008, as "National Physical Education and Sports Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I am pleased to submit a resolution today with my colleague, Senator WYDEN OR, designating the month of May as "National Physical Fitness and Sports Month" and the first week of May as "National Physical Education and Sports Week."

Developing healthy habits is important for all of us, as children, young